

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PREPARATIONS FOR TECHNICAL EXPERTS WORKING GROUP

REF: STATE 176735

1. TALKS OVER THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS BY EMBOFF WITH A NUMBER OF VENEZUELAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY LEADERS INDICATE THAT THE GOV IS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS DR. MARCELO ALONZO'S PROPOSALS IN THIS AREA. THE VENEZUELANS ARE PARTICULARLY OPPOSED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE AT THIS TIME. SOURCES IN THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION AND TECHNOLOGY (CONICIT) STATE THAT, IN THEIR OPINION, RESOLUTION 87 OF UNCTAD IV AND ECOSOC RESOLUTION 580 FIRST REVISION OVERRIDE EARLIER OAS RESOLUTIONS IN THIS FIELD. THE GOV FEELS THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MUST FIRST REINFORCE THEIR NATIONAL S&R INFRASTRUCTURE BEFORE THEY WILL BE ABLE TO USEFULLY DEVOTE ANY RESOURCES TO A REGIONAL EFFORT. THERE APPEARS TO BE AT LEAST SOME CONFUSION IN THE MINDS OF THE VENEZUELANS BETWEEN THE S&T WORKING GROUPS AND A REGIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE.

2. CONICIT STATES THAT ALONZO DEVOTED MOST OF HIS VERY SHORT VISIT TO VENEZUELA TO DISCUSSIONS ON THE RESEARCH INSTITUTE RATHER THAN THE WORKING GROUP. THE DIRECTOR OF THE VENEZUELAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (IVIC) WHO IS ALSO VICE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT OF CONICIT REPORTS THAT HIS CONTACT WITH ALONZO IN

JULY WAS LIMITED TO A BRIEF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION AND THAT HE HELD NO SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM.

3. THE VENEZUELANS STATE THAT THEY FEEL QUITE ILL-INFORMED ON THE WHOLE SUBJECT. DUE TO A LAST MINUTE BUREAUCRATIC MIX-UP IN THE PLANNING MINISTRY (CORDIPLAN) NO ONE FROM VENEZUELA ATTENDED THE LAST CIECC MEETING IN WASHINGTON. CONICIT REPORTS THAT THE GOV WAS REPRESENTED BY A SECOND RANKING OFFICER FROM ITS OAS MISSION WHO REPORTED NOTHING TO CARACAS.

4. COMMENT: NOT ONLY DID ALONZO GENERATE NO ENTHUSIASM IN VENEZUELA, HE ALSO LEFT THE VENEZUELANS WITH A FEELING THAT THEY DONT KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON. WORKING LEVEL OFFICERS IN CONICIT WOULD CLEARLY PREFER THE WHOLE S&T QUESTION TO BE TREATED IN THE UN RATHER THAN THE OAS.

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